

PROGRAMME UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

SRI LANKA

20 December 2001

This Programme Update is intended for reporting on Annual Appeals.

Appeal No. 01.39/2001

Appeal Target CHF 1,016,169

Programme Update No. 2 Period covered: 1 July-31 December

Last Programme Update issued 06 July 2001

“At a Glance”

Appeal coverage: 35.5%

Related Appeals: 01.33/2001 South Asia Regional Programmes

Outstanding needs: CHF 655,793

Update: The response to the appeal programme has been modest but significant progress has been made in building the capacity of the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society particularly in terms of staff and volunteer capability in disaster response and preparedness. The society's communications ability has greatly increased making it a more effective advocate on behalf of vulnerable people.

Operational Developments:

The 20-year-old civil war in the country between the Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has continued and the LTTE attack on the country's only international airport on 24th July 2001 again brought the conflict to international attention. The country's economy has suffered a double setback, both from the aftermath of the Katunayake airport attack and of the 11th September attacks in the USA. Sri Lanka's economy is highly dependent for foreign exchange earnings from tourism to the country, exports of key items (with the USA being a large market), and foreign remittances from migrant workers.

The global economic downturn has had a direct adverse impact on Sri Lanka. In the first nine months of 2001 exports in dollar terms fell by 8.1% over the corresponding period in 2000. All major sectors have been severely affected - with garments and textile exports declining by 10.6%, tourist arrivals declining by 6.9%, migrant workers' earnings falling by 3.1%, and the price of tea declining by 16% over the first nine months.

The Central Bank has revised the GDP growth rate projection for 2001 down to less than 1% or even negative, and the Chambers of Commerce have predicted a growth rate of 0.6% for 2002. The inflation rate for 2001 has been adjusted to 13.1%. Unemployment remains a dominant economic issue, with the statistics of those who are

unemployed in the age group up to 24 years ranging between 32% and 38%, and the overall total of unemployed in the country being one million people.

Political instability led to the dissolution of Parliament on 10th October and the calling of a General Election which was held within a year of the previous one on 5th December 2001. The 12th Parliamentary Election to elect 225 Members of Parliament from 4,610 candidates representing 26 political parties and 120 independent groups was monitored by 91 foreign observers and 12,000 local observers. The elections concluded with 46 deaths and 2,332 election related incidents of violence marking it as the most violent election in the country's recent history.

The United National Party, which had spent just over seven years in Opposition after its defeat in 1994, was elected to form a UNP/United National Front Government winning 109 seats (four seats short of an absolute Parliamentary majority) with 13 from the National List, whereas the nearest rival party, the People's Alliance, won 77 seats with 11 from the National List. According to the 1978 Constitution this means that the Executive President in office with four more years of her term to run presides for the first time over a Parliament largely comprised of those who are politically opposed to her. Several observers hope that this marks a new opportunity for a joint political effort to achieve political reform and peace.

It remains to be seen as to how these events will impact in the coming months on the earlier attempt to find ways of re-establishing a peace process in relation to the conflict, as well as on foreign investor confidence in the economy.

A severe drought affected some parts of the South of the country, with serious effects being felt from July onwards by highly vulnerable communities. The communities had lost between two and four consecutive crop cycles over the past two years. The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) and the Federation's International Appeal of 14th August 2001 played a key advocacy role in alerting other institutions of the need to make a response, releasing an exceptional and unprecedented response from both the general public, the corporate sector in the country, and the international community to making donations.

The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society has also adopted a new Constitution in October 2001 at its Annual General Meeting and General Assembly. It has received the praise of the Joint ICRC and Federation Commission on the Revision of Statutes in Geneva for its work to meet all the minimum standards of the Federation's "Guidance for NS Statutes" and for providing a model for the South Asia and other regions to follow.

Disaster Response

On 14th August 2001 the SLRCS and Federation launched an International Appeal (see appeal no. 25/2001 and related programme updates) for CHF 1,258,427 to assist drought-affected communities in the Southern part of Sri Lanka. The specific objectives and activities were to identify and distribute food relief items to 6,500 most vulnerable families for a period of 6 months at the level of 50% of international Sphere requirements (after this was proposed by the affected communities).

This operation has won the praise of central Government Ministries, District Government Agents, Divisional Government Secretariat officials, Gram Niladari (village head persons), the affected communities, the media, and many other national and international NGOs. It has enabled the most vulnerable families to have supplementary food until the beginning of the next harvest season. At that point it is hoped that the harvesting activities for both marginal farmers and daily agricultural labourers will enable the families to raise enough local incomes to purchase their family food needs.

The SLRCS has benefited significantly institutionally from their experience in relief operations and has a substantial number of available volunteers. Many of the younger volunteers have received valuable first time, as well as refresher, training in disaster preparedness and vulnerability capacity assessments. SLRCS has also networked with other institutions and has used resource persons from agencies, such as NORAD, and the Government to supplement and widen the scope of their training. The drought relief distributions have already significantly increased the co-ordination, logistics and resource mobilisation skills not only of personnel in the NHQ and drought-affected Branches, but also in Branches. An example is the Colombo Branch who undertook

widespread communications and fund raising work, and finally sent 40 volunteers to participate in the second food relief distribution itself on 9th September.

The whole disaster operation, building on the coverage of SLRCS's disaster response programme following the cyclone of December 2000, has built positive positioning for the Society in both the media and the national institutions of the country.

To increase the SLRCS's ability to strengthen itself further using learning from this experience, on 23rd November the Federation's Regional Disaster Preparedness Delegate and Regional DP Manager from Delhi facilitated a "Lessons learned" exercise with all internal and several external stakeholders in the SLRCS drought relief programme. The one-day workshop, was well attended by Red Cross Branch Chairman, Secretary, volunteers and governance, national HQ staff co-ordinating the overall relief programme, community level beneficiaries of the programme, local Government Agents at District and Divisional levels, and village head persons (Gram Niladaris).

All invitees actively participated in the learning exercise, and conducted a Strengths/ Weaknesses/ Opportunities/Threats (SWOT) exercise to help all concerned to be more effective next time. Key recommendations made were:

- More participatory discussions with affected communities (as required by Sphere standards) in ensuring food commodities are appropriate (some community members felt that less flour and more rice could have been agreed in the rations).
- Assessment surveys should be notified to villages before the due date so that families could be in place.
- Increase dissemination about the Red Cross and its role (it was highly appreciated that community would like their children to be taught about the RC in schools etc)
- Volunteers stated the need to have more rest factored into their work (for example handling only one large distribution per day in future as sometimes the work was only completed by 3am in the morning).

The rainfall pattern from October to December was not as high as required for a full harvest to be predicted. The SLRCS and the Federation Delegation are keeping a carefully co-ordinated response with Government and other institutions.

Disaster Preparedness

Community-based Disaster Preparedness and Response Programme

The SLRCS's governance, members and staff dedicated a large part of 2001 to the intensive process of revising and adopting the Society's new Constitution, which was finally achieved in October. As a result many of the Society's activities were slowed in the last six months of the year by this important process. Nevertheless, there have been significant achievements in the Society's disaster preparedness (DP) programme against its objectives as follows:

Objective 1: *To improve the DP programme of the national society.*

The SLRCS used some of their Regional DFID DP programme support to send three participants to the Federation's South Asia Regional DP workshop in Delhi in October. By participating in the training sessions there they have helped to share lessons learned during disaster response programmes with other NS, helped to strengthen the Regional DP Policy using experience from Sri Lanka's DP programme, examined the use of effective advocacy by sharing the recent SLRCS case study of the drought in Sri Lanka with other NS, and brought back ideas of improving the Community Based DP (CBDP) training materials in use in the Society.

To share the lessons learned in the Regional training workshop, the SLRCS participants also shared in the joint facilitation of an SLRCS workshop on DP held on 24th-26th November for 30 participants from all Branches. Members of SLRCS's "Relief and DP" Committees also attended to ensure governance action to follow up on policy levels in the Society. 27 participants attended (with 3 from the National HQ), and the facilitators included

two international persons - the Federation Regional DP Delegate and Manager - and six local facilitators from within SLRCS, the Sri Lanka ICRC Delegation, as well as from local NGOs.

The objectives of the workshop were to invite and train as effective trainers one participant from each of the 25 Branches, and five from NHQ, who had previously attended the Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) and CBDP training in 1999. The aim was to refresh their knowledge on needs assessment techniques, Sphere standards and multi-sectoral survey tools, conflict preparedness (with the assistance of ICRC representation throughout the workshop), and communication skills during emergencies. The Sphere session was facilitated by a qualified Sphere trainer from SCF(UK). Other sessions included training in volunteer recruitment incorporating gender and diversity practices, logistics in relief operations, and drawing up District DP plans for each Branch.

The workshop also involved many Branches, including Hambantota Branch on the drought operation, making presentations to help facilitate learning at all levels. The outcomes of the one day "lessons learned" exercises facilitated by the Regional DP Delegate after both the cyclone and drought operations were also shared to help identify future ways of strengthening the Society's DP activities. Participants increased their understanding of participatory evaluation techniques which, should always include beneficiary participation as had been achieved in the Hambantota "Lessons Learned" exercise a few days before this workshop.

ICRC colleagues and Branches working in the most conflict-affected Districts also shared their learning. The learning was achieved from having recruited teams with 300 SLRCS DP and conflict preparedness volunteers, equipped with pre-positioned stocks of non-food relief items, a network of warehouses, and working within a clear conflict preparedness plan for every District Branch in the North and East.

There was also an important discussion and small group work on how to achieve a more active recruitment of women to the DP programme activities. Several Branches shared successful recent practices (e.g. the gender balanced recruitment of young women and men volunteers during the Hambantota Drought Relief operation). The plenary session included many ideas and action plans for increasing the participation of women, which will be monitored in future. This will also link to the new approach to improved Human Resource Development cycles in the National Society covered later in the "Organisational Development" section of this report.

The participants concluded the workshop with a training on more effective communications systems to improve internal and external information flow in times of disaster. Topics covered in small group work and national recommendations were the need to improve information and communications strategies, defining the goals and target audiences of communications objectives, using the opportunity to disseminate about the RC/RC Movement, and planning to use the media opportunities well. It was agreed that the Hambantota Drought operation had been an excellent model of effective communication leading to advocacy on behalf of the most vulnerable to receive more effective and timely relief.

The expected impact of the workshop in strengthening SLRCS's DP programme will be assessed in early 2002. However there was already an agreement about the need for each Branch to have a DP plan at District level in an integrated manner with Government and other institutions. There was also an agreement to produce more plans to train active volunteers and members. A record of all their details at all levels should also be produced, in readiness for deployment on assessment and relief operations.

To share the learning from the national DP training workshop with a wider range of volunteers at Branch levels, trained participants from this national workshop conducted three further DP workshops at District level in December. The workshops took place in Colombo, Hambantota, and Moneragala. A total of 40 local DP volunteers and members of these Branches received two days of training to improve the DP plans and activities of SLRCS in these locations prone to recurring disasters.

A national SLRCS DP policy and plan will also need to be developed early in 2002. It is planned that this will develop with harmonisation of all RC/RC Movement components (SLRCS, Federation, ICRC and Spanish Red Cross) who will therefore be able to contribute in a synergetic way to SLRCS's DP programme.

The emergence of a national SLRCS DP Policy and plan will facilitate the more effective implementation of the Spanish Red Cross DipECHO bilateral DP programme. The donation is aimed for 8 flood-affected Districts of

Sri Lanka which was approved by DipECHO in August. The intention is to facilitate the learning from the eight focussed Districts in this programme and share it with all other Branches. The Districts are Colombo, Galle, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Puttalam, Polonnaruwa, Ratnapura and Kalutara. The programme will rely on the appointment of one national DP Co-ordinator, two DP Training Officers, one Accounts Clerk, and one driver. The Spanish Red Cross has contributed CHF 592,440 to the SLRCS DP Appeal for 2001/02 with the funds being transferred directly to the National Society.

The Spanish bilateral Delegate to support the programme arrived in November, and began action planning with the national HQ and selected Branch staff and volunteers to deliver the 12 month dipECHO supported DP programme's objectives. Initial meetings were also held with the dipECHO representative in Sri Lanka to ensure a high level of co-operation and mutual visioning in this important programme. The programme is being planned in a highly co-ordinated and integrated way between the Spanish Red Cross, the SLRCS, the Federation Delegation and ICRC (as two of the selected Districts are highly conflict-affected).

The SLRCS also sent a five member delegation for a structured learning visit to Bangladesh Red Crescent Society in December to better understand the advanced DP and relief systems developed by the NS there. The objectives included to learn about vulnerability assessment processes and tools in use, the training curriculum used to train community level DP volunteers, experiences of effective co-ordination with Government and other NGOs and the roles of NHQ and Branches in this respect, and the roles and functioning of DP and Relief Committees. On their return from Bangladesh the participants will conduct further training of SLRCS DP programme staff and volunteers on their learning in early 2002.

The Federation's Regional Disaster Response Delegate visited SLRCS to provide additional support and monitoring of the drought relief operation from 10th-16th September. During his visit he conducted a half day workshop to refresh the understanding and compliance of the Society's Finance and Tendering Committee with the new Federation minimum standards in tendering and procurement processes, which improved the internal tendering system by strengthening the need to get food quality certificates, contracts with suppliers, and waybill systems properly in place.

Objective 2: *To establish early warning systems in disaster prone areas.*

The experience of the vulnerability survey questionnaire developed and used by SLRCS during the drought relief operation has encouraged the Society to learn about other early warning and surveillance systems. Part of the objectives of the exposure visit to Bangladesh is to learn about the early warning systems in place there. The Sphere session during the national SLRCS DP workshop in December also included reference to the Sphere multi-sectoral assessment tool currently available on the Sphere website.

The Spanish Red Cross dipECHO funded DP programme will develop specific early warning indicators and systems by mid-2002 and it is expected that these will be tested and evaluated throughout the flash flood season between June and November 2002 for further learning and refinement.

Objective 3: *To renovate and expand the number of existing warehouses.*

The Federation DP programme funds were made available to equip 3 disaster prone Districts each with a large tent (capable of accommodating 50 persons each), sets of cooking pots and utensils for 150 families, a large water tank, emergency flash lights and one small generator as non-food preparedness stocks in hand for any quick onset disasters.

The Spanish Red Cross/dipECHO supported DP programme will be equipping the selected 8 District Branches with personal protective items for all DP volunteers (raincoats with emblems, boots, First Aid kits etc.) In addition shovels, crowbars and other tools, and tents and non-food relief items as preparedness stocks for 250 families will be placed in each of the District warehouses. This programme also includes the costs for upgrading the warehouses in the 8 flood-affected Districts. Action planning for this programme began in November and December.

Objective 4: *Increased involvement of communities in DP and relief and increased public awareness on DP.*

The SLRCS has integrated community participation into its recent drought relief programme by involving the community in the vulnerability assessment phase through door questionnaires. This meets the international Sphere standards of community participation in programme planning. The society also involved the community in a participatory mid-term review and “Lessons Learned” exercise in November. This led to many constructive comments by the drought-affected communities, which included positive comments about wanting to become members of the Red Cross.

The SLRCS also noted the willingness of communities to get involved in active parts of the distribution programmes of food relief assistance, and this gives the SLRCS Branches an opportunity to work in a longer term process on disaster mitigation training and capacity building in early 2002 in this drought-prone District.

The national level DP workshop on DP held in November in Sri Lanka will also result in clearer DP plans emerging in all Branches. The three District level follow-up DP trainings organised for December will introduce the idea at Branch level of community and public education on DP. The plans of Branches will be monitored in early 2002 onwards to assess the manner in which community participation and empowerment are integrated into the programme’s objectives.

The Spanish Red Cross/DipdipECHO programme already has integrated components of community empowerment in it and this pilot programme will also help other Branches to learn from the ways in which this is undertaken and achieved.

Objective 5: *To expand the society’s ambulance services in the capital city.*

No funding was received for this programme.

Humanitarian Values

Although the SLRCS did not receive any funding support for this programme, the ICRC continues to provide its support for the Society’s Dissemination programme. This programme has specific but closely associated objectives. Nevertheless, the Federation supported post of the SLRCS Information Officer at NHQ, together with the Branch level Information and Dissemination Officers, continued to achieve high visibility for the Red Cross Society and to increase public understanding of the Fundamental Principles as a result.

The Appeal objectives below were therefore met to some extent through non-funded but vitally important activities carried out by SLRCS in the following ways:

Objective 1: *To develop a communications strategy and produce a regular flow of materials for the public and the authorities on the national society's mandate and activities.*

The SLRCS Information Officer has held media briefings and press conferences for personnel from both the print and electronic media in all three languages on the drought relief programmes of the Society, using this as a strategic opportunity to reinforce the Red Cross mandate according to the Fundamental principles. Approximately 30 journalists attended the last press conference in September, and the Information Officer has also strengthened the strategic links with the media in all three languages by facilitating visits to see Branch volunteers in action in relief programmes and distributions.

The Information Officer visited the Federation’s South Asia Delegation office in Delhi for two weeks in November to receive further structured training in the production of public relations materials, communications strategies, and to achieve a clearer understanding of the components of advocacy as contained in the Federation’s new Advocacy Policy. During her visit to India, she also worked to exchange strategies and learning with the Information Officer of the Indian Red Cross Society, and travelled to see strategic communications work in action at Branch level in Orissa State. These new experiences will be turned into new publicity ideas for Red Cross materials to be produced in early 2002.

More information on this visit is contained in the “Information Development programme” section of the Organisational Development section of this report.

Objective 2: *To increase awareness in the Ministry of Social Services and other relevant Governmental authorities of the activities of the SLRCS and the Red Cross Movement’s Fundamental Principles.*

Due to the lack of funding for this programme, as well as to the external instability in the political environment before the general Election of 5th December, the orientation workshops envisaged with the relevant Ministries were postponed until early 2002. The SLRCS hopes that in early 2002 this programme can be activated and that it can form a more focussed part of the orientation of key Ministers and officials which will be urgently needed in the newly elected Government.

Objective 3: *To improve the orientation of staff and volunteers on the fundamental principles and humanitarian values through a more regular internal communications flow.*

The planned further national level induction course and orientation of the 25 Branch Information and Dissemination Officers could not take place because of lack of funding in 2001 for this programme. However, a joint SLRCS/Federation/ICRC course is planned for early 2002 if funding allows. This will allow these Branch level volunteers to confidently run orientation trainings for new volunteers and members.

In the meantime the Society has included in the provisions of its new Constitution adopted in October 2001 the position of a paid Branch Executive Officer in every Branch. This will also add personnel strength to the local Branch level team to conduct orientation and induction of many new members envisaged after planned membership drives are undertaken by several Branches in December and January.

The continuous development of the Society’s newsletter has been prioritised as one important vehicle for documenting and sharing among the membership the programmes and activities that serve to give good examples of the Fundamental Principles in action.

Health and Care

Community Health Promotion and Training programme

Objective 1: *To strengthen the National Society’s overall health management capacity.*

The SLRCS have initiated the pilot health programme supported by the Canadian Red Cross by successfully appointing an experienced National Director and Co-ordinator of Community Health in July. Since their appointment both these staff members have immediately contributed to strengthening the SLRCS’s overall health management capacity. They were also immediately linked into the South Asia Regional Health programme by being invited to participate in the Regional Health Forum for all six National Societies’ Health Managers convened by the Federation’s Regional Health Delegate in Sri Lanka in July.

The Director and National Co-ordinator have begun to map the diverse existing health related activities conducted by many Branches across the country. This is in order to be able to better co-ordinate, support, monitor, and evaluate the various health activities carried out at District levels in the future.

The newly-established Health Unit at the National HQ has already established a strong link with the Government health structure. The unit has also developed a strong working relationship with the national and Provincial level Health Directors to avoid duplication of activities and maximise the potential impact of SLRCS’s health programme. The key officials in the Government Health Departments have pledged their full support and co-operation. This pledged support will lead to a long term sustainable relationship with the Government health sector in the future, by enabling co-ordinated services to reach the most vulnerable populations.

The National Director and co-ordinator of Community Health have undertaken visits to all Branches selected for prioritised research against the criteria agreed in the Canadian RC supported programme. They have done this to identify the most suitable Branch to establish the District and Divisional level pilot community health

programme. Kurunegala District has been chosen for the first 12 month pilot programme in consultation with the Canadian RC representative who also visited Sri Lanka in November to explore progress in the programme.

Activities were underway in December to recruit and train the District Community Health Officer for Kurunegala. A fully equipped and refurbished Health Training Centre has been established in the National HQ. The District Community Health Officer will be supported in conducting a baseline needs survey by the end of December.

The new Director and National Co-ordinator of Community Health are also planning a process to help Branches across the country learn from the preventive and curative community based health programmes currently running in the highly conflict-affected areas of the country. The Health Unit is exploring how best to utilise this learning experience, which may ultimately be drawn into a new health management structure.

The preliminary ideas are for linking, for example, the SLRCS First Aid and ambulance programmes, as well as the other mobile health service programmes in the conflict areas run mostly by SLRCS into an overall health management structure. This would mean linking these activities to the wider existing services of the Society such as free dental and health clinics, blood donation camps, and the management of all PHC centres and health facilities under a single national health programme.

Objective 2: To increase public awareness of communicable diseases and prevention and curative activities in the fields of first aid, HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, family planning and primary health care.

In order to learn from experiences and increase the participation of vulnerable communities in planning their own health management and referral systems to other health services, the pilot community health programme has undertaken several activities at national and pilot District level. In Kurunegala the Primary Health Care centre in the District will be renovated in the next 6 months. This to help expand the existing Red Cross reproductive Health and Primary Health Care programmes there. The refurbished PHC centre will help to supply basic training and information and education materials to surrounding communities. It will also act as an information and resource centre with training facilities under the guidance of the PHC officer.

As one of the activities undertaken by many Branches is blood donation, the national Health Unit has developed plans to increase the quality of blood-related programmes in the National Society. The Director and National Co-ordinator of Health have distributed a questionnaire to all Branches to assess the data on existing blood donation activities. They have also developed a Safe Blood Donor Recruitment plan to scale up the Society's services in this area.

In order to increase the partnership with the Government in the field of safe blood, the SLRCS has accessed Regional Federation funding support to enable the National Co-ordinator of Community Health and the Director of the Government's Health Department Blood Transfusion services to attend together an international Symposium on Blood Programmes for Securing Safe Blood in Thailand in November. The outcome of this exercise will be the agreeing of a donor recruitment plan, a resource development programme for blood donor recruitment activities, and the setting up of a national database of donors for especially rare blood groups in 2002, if funding can be secured for this.

It is planned that these programmes will culminate with a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government's central Blood Bank. The Director of the Government's Blood Bank has already agreed to be a member of SLRCS's new National Committee on Community Health. It is proposed that this Committee will initially also undertake the roles of a national level "Blood Donor recruitment Policy Committee".

The SLRCS will also be hosting the next meeting of the South Asia Regional Safe Blood Working Group meeting to be held in February 2002.

The National Society's First Aid training programme continues to spread public skills in First Aid. Between 1st July and 15th December the Society conducted FA training for 1191 participants from 48 external companies, NGOs and institutions. Of these 511 were male and 680 were female. In addition between July and December the Society's FA training team in NHQ trained 57 male and 38 female individuals in FA. Other First Aid training

was conducted in the Branches of Kandy, Colombo, Moneragala, Trincomalee, and Ratnapura where a total of 68 male and 100 female volunteers and members were trained. Team trainings were also conducted for a total of 154 members of 16 Branches across the country.

Objective 3: *To expand the existing reproductive and child health care programmes.*

This objective is also being addressed as part of the Canadian supported community health programme. The activities covered under this objective and mentioned in the previous Objective 2 above.

Objective 4: *To develop an active HIV/AIDS awareness programme.*

Although this programme received no funding in the Appeal for 2001-2002, funds have been accessed from other Federation Regional Health sources to enable the SLRCS learn from the experience of other National Societies in health and care in the community programmes.

The Director of Community Health was nominated to attend the Federation's Asia Pacific international conference on HIV/AIDS in October. The South Asia National Societies held a sub-Regional meeting at the end of the conference and agreed a programme of Regional action. This will entail the Director of Community Health working with the SLRCS Board of Governors to scale up the Society's work on HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention programmes.

The commitments made by SLRCS at the international conference included action on promoting awareness of the human rights of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs); integrating HIV/AIDS sensitisation training into the Canadian supported health programme's activities at community level. It also including the activities of exploring an SLRCS advocacy strategy to help the Government and other NGOs adopt appropriate new legislation regarding the law and ethics in relation to PLWHAs; promoting a better environment to prevent and control HIV/AIDS, including considering setting up an SLRCS telephone hotline and counselling service. Finally it entailed the activity of organising public education programmes through street dramas, poster competitions, exhibitions, and puppet shows.

The National Community Health Co-ordinator attended a further international conference on HIV/AIDS in Thailand in December and on his return action will be taken to train 250 youth peer educators from the Junior Red Cross youth members to develop HIV/AIDS awareness trainings from early in 2002.

Institutional and Resource Development

Institutional Development Programme

Objective 1: *To review and revise the Society's Constitution and to brief members, governance, and management on the provisions of the new constitution.*

With funding and technical support from both the Federation and ICRC the Society completed an extensive and participatory series of internal consultation meetings. This to ensure that the new draft Constitution and the accompanying new Rules and Procedures were both acceptable to, and understood by all members of Branch committees and members, and all delegates from the Branches to the Society's General Assembly and Annual General meeting on 28th October 2001. The General Assembly finally adopted the new Constitution unanimously.

The Joint Federation and ICRC Commission in Geneva on National Society Statutes gave its approval and praise for the new Constitution which follows all the minimum and several more optional good practice recommendations in the Federation's "Guidance for NS Statutes". The SLRCS Board of Governors met in December to finally clarify remaining roles and responsibilities of governance and management in a two day meeting also facilitated by the Federation and ICRC. These achieved final clarity in the roles of the President, National Secretary, Finance Commission, central Governing Board, and Director General.

The membership of SLRCS will elect new representatives at all divisional, District and national levels to the functions prescribed in the new Constitution during the first six months of 2002. It will be culminating in the

election of the full new Central Governing Board, President, National Secretary, Vice Presidents, and Chair of the Finance Commission in its next AGM in June 2002. Until that time, the existing Board of Governors was asked to function as the interim Central Governing Board.

Branches have started membership drives at all levels since the new Constitution was adopted in October. The aim is to refresh the membership, and the Board of Governors in December made decision to put in place a monitoring mechanism to ensure that all new (and existing) members receive proper and adequate orientation and induction into the principles and values of the RC/RC Movement, and the Constitutional provisions of the National Society. These processes will ensure that the electoral processes will result in informed choices that elect representatives at each level who can serve the Society with appropriate time and commitment to RC/RC principles.

In addition two members from the new central Governing Board attended the Federation's pilot Leadership Development programme held for 10 days in Geneva. The SLRCS was one of a small number of NS globally who showed interest in nominating participants as part of its long term governance capacity building plan. The new pilot course, jointly facilitated by the Federation and ICRC, aims to provide orientation to members of NS Boards of Governance so that they can also help their Societies to grow in understanding of the Movement's core and changing areas of work. The visit was successfully concluded in November, and the two participants will return to Geneva to complete the third and final module in April 2002.

Objective 2: To develop and implement a comprehensive human resource development (HRD) strategy for staff and volunteers.

In December a workshop was held for the whole Board of Governors to assist the Society in redefining a comprehensive HRD policy. Five participants (3 from governance and 2 from senior management level) who participated in the South Asia Regional HRD workshop in Nepal in early December presented their learning from other Regional HRD activities and made a recommendation to the Board for the adoption of a new HRD Policy for SLRCS staff and volunteers. These participants also committed themselves to using the new HRD materials and experiences they gained from other NS to train more SLRCS colleagues from all Branches and NHQ in a structured and planned way during 2002.

The national Training Co-ordinator resigned from his post in August, but the Society has since reviewed this function, and has decided to replace the function with a more senior Assistant Director (HRD) position to bring together the overall training and HRD work in the Society. The new Assistant Director (HRD) was appointed in November and he brings with him very senior HRD skills from the corporate sector. The job description includes drafting the Society's new HRD Policy, Manual and procedures which was agreed by the Board of Governors in its December meeting; introducing effective job appraisal and performance review systems; developing volunteer management systems; and ensuring planned approaches to staff and volunteer skill development and training programmes. It has been agreed that the Society will aim to draw extensively from the draft South Asia HRD manual for improved volunteer and staff management.

Another key recommendation to the Board of Governors by the five members who attended the Regional HRD workshop was for SLRCS to adopt a national Volunteering and Gender Policy in keeping with the Federation's Policies which were approved by the General Assembly in 1999. These Policies will be drafted and adopted by the Society's governance in February 2002 to enhance the Society's strategies and systems in these important areas of HRD during early 2002 and beyond.

Objective 3: To increase the recruitment, training and retention of volunteers and members.

The SLRCS Branch Development Committee met in November to review the strengths and weaknesses of their work, mandate, and of the roles of the current pilot Branch Development Officers. It was agreed that the overall focus of Branch development should be an increased focus on fewer priorities such as recruiting and orienting new members and volunteers, and to actively use and retain new and existing volunteers to strengthen Branch capacity. This is in order to deliver effective new programmes, improve financial management, expand the areas of operation of each Branch according to new needs, and develop new fundraising programmes.

The selection criteria for the appointment of the 6 new Branch Development Officers funded by this programme included volunteer mobilisation skills and experience, as well as basic accounting skills, project implementation experience (e.g. in NGOs), and confidence in communications and training skills. Branches in recurrent disaster prone districts were prioritised as locations for these new posts to build the capacities of volunteers in these Branches to contribute more actively to programme development.

These appointments also enable the Society to draft the job descriptions for the new Branch Executive Officer posts per Branch to enable each Branch to have a senior paid post to monitor and facilitate better consistency and quality of volunteer recruitment and orientation programmes.

Objective 4: To develop leadership qualities and skills in management to meet the challenges of strategic management.

There were no activities supported under this objective in this six month reporting period due to a lack of funds. However, the new Assistant Director (HRD) has prioritised management training at all levels for his initial workplan for the first quarter of 2002.

Objective 5: To diversify existing income generating programmes and create new sustainable programmes.

A national “Local Resource Mobilisation” workshop was held in November. The 4 day training allowed 27 participants from Branches and 6 from NHQ to share existing good practices in resource mobilisation from private and corporate donor sources. The 4 skilled external trainers from a resource agency called the “South Asia Fund raising Group” based in Delhi also updated participants skills in a wide variety of fund raising skills developed elsewhere in the South Asia Region.

The participants of the Resource Mobilisation workshops also agreed that the Society needs to develop a national Fundraising Policy. The policy will covering such issues as how fun raising at Branch and NHQ levels should be co-ordinated, the development of national donor bases, external communications strategies, and ethical fundraising. The absence of this Policy currently causes confusion.

A national “Resource Mobilisation” committee has been established since the workshop. It includes both SLRCS representatives and those from the external corporate sector. This is an extremely positive move and the Committee will aim to work on both the draft Policy as well as a clear action plan to improve the Society’s local resource mobilisation techniques in Sri Lanka. In the meantime an application has also been made to the Federation’s global Capacity Building Fund for two years’ funding to enable the SLRCS to appoint a national Director and Assistant Director of Fund raising and Communications. An outcome of the decision is awaited in early 2002.

The existing Branch Development Officers attended this national workshop to receive training to improve the structured plans and capacities for resource mobilisation at local levels. As a result many Branches adopted strengthened plans such as establishing local fundraising committees, encouraging membership and support from the corporate sector. The plans also entailed increased use of the media to help the public to increase the positive positioning of the Branches as delivering efficient and well targeted services to the vulnerable.

Prior to the workshop a preparatory “learning” meeting was held with the Society’s Branch Development and Millennium Fundraising Committee members, which highlighted the links between Branch Development and Fundraising. The workshop helped to link the job descriptions for this post to the position of Branch Development Officers, and to make local and sustainable fund raising a priority part of their roles. This will help Branches to develop sustainable programmes and structures through locally mobilised funds (although this may not be possible for Branches working in the conflict affected areas).

The weakness of the past was that neither staff nor volunteers had seen resource mobilisation as a vital part of sustainable Branch development and this should be rectified. A case study of the Society’s existing First Aid resource mobilisation experience was presented to the “Local Resource Mobilisation” workshop. Many Branches have planned to increase their commercial approach to income from this source of Red Cross service to external

NGOs and companies. It was reported that between July and December SLRCs had raised rupees 390,825 from commercial First Aid training activities, with potential for Branches to raise much more if they undertake such activities in a more planned and co-ordinated way.

At a meeting of the SLRCS Directors' team in December, and a subsequent proposal made by them to the Board of Governors in its December meeting, it has been agreed that a restructuring of the senior management team should include the appointment of a national Fundraising and Communications Director. Preliminary work on her/his job description will be completed by early January 2002.

A Fundraising manual has been prepared for the SLRCS by the South Asia Fundraising Group and this was distributed to all participating Branches in November. Further copies will be distributed to the Branches who could not attend the national training workshop. The Board of Governors agreed to consider a draft national SLRCS Fund raising Policy in early 2002 to strengthen the approach of the Society at all levels to plan for local resource mobilisation and sustainability. Part of the follow-up action plan will be further structured fundraising skills training at all levels throughout the SLRCS and the setting of baseline indicators to measure increased income against projected business plans to start in early 2002.

Finance Development

Objective 1: *To expand the computerised accounting system in the national headquarters and in selected Branches.*

The proposed software for a new accounting package for SLRCS has been identified by the Finance Director and his department. The Federation's Regional Finance Manager will visit SLRCS in January 2002 to consider and approve the package.

In the meantime the SLRCS Finance Director attended the first ever meeting of Finance Directors from all South Asian National Societies held in Nepal in November 2001. The agenda of the three-day meeting included sharing information and ideas and mutually supportive comments on the existing financial management systems in each of the NS. It also included understanding and deciding on a more common path towards financial development across the Region as well as developing a common approach to introducing computer-based accounting systems across the NS.

The discussions and knowledge sharing enabled the SLRCS Finance Director to develop a clear action plan for seeking approval for the proposed system in Sri Lanka. This is to be concluded by a visit from the Federation's Regional Finance Manager to SLRCS in January 2002. From the Federation's global Capacity Building Fund, funds have been mobilised for six Branches to receive computers in 2001.

The allocation of six Branch Development Officers as well to these prioritised Branches, all of whom have been appointed with accountancy competencies and skills, will strengthen the ability of the Finance Director to train an initial six Branches in early 2002 in using improved and nationally consolidated financial management systems for income and expenditure control and monitoring.

Objective 2: *To further improve financial management and administrative procedures and train finance, non-finance and senior management in financial procedures.*

The SLRCS has managed to make progress on its workplan to improve financial procedures after the adoption of the Society's new Constitution. The Finance Procedures Manual was redrafted by the Finance Committee to accommodate the new roles and responsibilities of governance and management as set out in the new Constitution and the accompanying new Rules and Procedures of the National Society.

Training in this new revised Finance Procedures Manual for both NHQ and all Branch officials will be undertaken in the first quarter of 2002.

Objective 3: *To further develop the internal audit function.*

The Society's new Constitution, with its clear separation between governance and management functions, will necessitate a redrafting of the existing Internal Audit Manual. This to take account of new internal control procedures at both NHQ and Branch levels. The Internal Auditor unfortunately underwent major surgery during this reporting period but he reported back to work in December. The work on redrafting the Internal Audit Manual has therefore commenced, but will only be completed in January 2002.

In the meantime at the meeting of all the Regional National Societies' Finance Directors held in Nepal in November 2001 the SLRCS model of having established an effective Internal Audit department with a reporting line of the Internal Auditor direct to the Chairman of the NS was considered to be the strongest model in the South Asia Region. It has been decided that the Nepal Red Cross Society's Treasurer and Internal Auditor (the only other Internal Audit department at present in South Asian NS) will visit SLRCS in January 2002 to learn from this experience and take back good practice to strengthen the systems in Nepal.

Youth Development

This programme could not make progress against the workplan for 2001 due to a lack of funding, with SLRCS having to prioritise their Constitution revision process in favour of some other activities. However, a number of important non-funded activities did take place against the objectives as follows:

***Objective 1:** To create a co-ordination mechanism for the youth wings of the Society at all levels.*

The job description for a National Co-ordinator Youth and a Youth Officer, both of whom were to be based in the NHQ, were finalised. Although the Youth Officer was appointed to keep activities running, it is hoped that SLRCS can access sufficient funds in 2002. This with the aim to recruit the National Co-ordinator to increase the ability of the Society to develop an effective and functioning national youth structure.

However, youth issues were widely discussed during the Society's Constitution revision process and the new Constitution makes provision for a Youth Wing with representation on every level of governance. It also provides for a separate Youth Red Cross constitution within the framework of the Society's overall Constitution. This will empower youth members to play a more active role in overall governance.

At a two-day national workshop for youth leaders an action plan was drawn up. Although this could not be implemented for funding reasons, the plan included the following elements which, it is hoped to operationalise in early 2002 onwards as soon as funding is realised: recruitment of the National Youth Co-ordinator; appointment of a national Youth Sub-committee to prepare, circulate and consult on a draft Youth Policy (in conformity with the Federation's Youth Policy) and to recruit and orient District and Divisional youth co-ordinators. The plan also includes the activities to conduct recruitment drives for new members and orient them into the SLRCS and RC/RC principles; identify a structure of youth leaders at all levels; develop retention programmes to involve youth members actively in the First Aid, DP, Health, HIV/AIDS awareness programmes of the NS; and set up exchange programmes to learn from exposure visits to other youth RC programmes in sister NS in and outside of the Region.

***Objective 2:** To recruit, orient and integrate youth wing members so that they play effective roles in all programme activities and in governance.*

A leaflet has been drafted to help recruit new youth members but is awaiting printing when funds can be identified after the National Co-ordinator is appointed.

Information Development

***Objective 1:** To develop a well-functioning and resourced information department.*

The SLRCS Information Officer has undertaken a structured learning exposure visit to the Federation's Regional Information Unit in Delhi for 14 days. The visit included travelling to see information and media work in action in the Orissa State Branch of the Indian Red Cross Society.

The objectives of this structured learning were to provide the Information Officer with hands-on practical training on various aspects of communications and external relations; to develop skills to increase high quality media coverage for the National Society; to share information with other counterparts in the Federation, ICRC Regional Delegation, and Indian Red Cross; to initiate and expand links with the local and international media based regionally in Delhi but covering Sri Lanka; and to increase an understanding of advocacy techniques.

The structured learning visit gave the Information Officer practical training, assisted by a wide variety of external and internal trainers, in website development from an external resource person including training in website development software such as Macromedia Dreamviewer and Microsoft Frontpage or Flash; video and photography techniques (facilitated by professional cameramen from Associated Press television News); desktop publishing; and press release writing.

Objective 2: *To develop and implement a strategic communications plan for the Society, including long term relationship building with the press and media.*

As part of her objectives during the structured learning visit to the Regional Federation's Information Unit in Delhi, the SLRCS Information Officer developed her strategic planning skills in drawing up a long-term Communications Strategy and Plan of Action for the National Society. This included training on how to make advocacy an important part of a National Society's work and how to implement effective advocacy campaigns in terms of the Federation's global priorities. External resource persons from UNICEF's advocacy and communications team were asked to supplement the Federation training.

The visit helped the SLRCS Information Officer to build on her capacity to work with the media in a strategic way. Overall this has helped her to understand the roles of advocacy more realistically. The wide variety of media articles and editorials, including significant coverage in the electronic radio and TV media during the recent Drought Relief operation also helped to provide case study material to learn from. As a result of each press release and effective community based set of activities, the SLRCS had succeeded in keeping the drought issue in the forefront of the media and public's eye. It has also improved its positioning as an effective relief and response institution with a wide range of actors.

Objective 3: *To improve information management between the national headquarters and the Branches as an integrated part of the wider Branch development programme.*

During the visit to the Regional Federation's Information Unit, the SLRCS Information Officer was trained in the use of the Federation's new "Communications Guide" for information and communications officers in the Movement. She has subsequently begun to develop an action plan for national level training of SLRCS's existing Information and Dissemination volunteers from all Branches to be undertaken with the Federation and ICRC in early 2002.

Co-ordination and Management

There have been four successful approaches to more effective co-ordination and management between SLRCS and other RC/RC Movement and external actors in the past six months as follows:

(i) Developing relations with sister National Societies

The Spanish Red Cross have successfully negotiated a CHF 592,440 contribution from dipECHO to support the DP programme of the Society for 2001 and 2002. A Spanish Red Cross Delegate arrived in Sri Lanka in November to help facilitate the programme. The Spanish RC have also initiated a development programme to strengthen two Branches in Ratnapura and Matale. The programmes to be supported by this agreement focus on developing community micro-credit savings mechanisms.

The SLRCS has also hosted visits from representatives from the Canadian and Norwegian Red Cross Societies in the past six months. A six member delegation from the SLRCS also visited the Iranian Red Crescent to seek to further develop the friendly relations that have been built up in the past. A draft action plan to consider further support from the Iranian RC towards the developmental activities of SLRCS is also being considered.

The SLRCS has also actively participated in all Regional Federation events and has prioritised the sharing of information with sister NS in South Asia. The exposure visits to Nepal and Bangladesh Societies on Finance Development and Disaster Preparedness, together with the participation in Regional workshops on DP (in India), HRD (in Nepal), and Health/HIV (in sub-regional task forces and forums in Thailand and Sri Lanka), have encouraged the Society not just to learn from other NS, but to actively share with others in programmes in which they have competency.

(ii) Co-ordination with external agencies, UN, and Diplomatic and Aid missions during the Drought Relief programme

During the Drought Relief operation from August onwards the Federation's Sri Lanka Delegation, with SLRCS involvement, convened a regular inter-agency meeting to share information and plan joint inter-agency strategies to address sectoral issues such as response to food, water, health and nutrition programmes. The meetings were welcomed and all these issues clearly received more co-ordinated attention. SLRCS exchanged information with WHO, UNICEF, and INGOs such as SCF (UK), and World Vision. This included information on assessing morbidity trends, possible health promotion campaigns, supplementary nutrition programmes for pregnant and lactating mothers and children under 5 years old, and other water and sanitation and hygiene related issues in a co-ordinated response. The Red Cross made it clear that it would focus on provision of food relief supplies.

The Federation was asked to make a presentation on the drought to the UN's Donor Forum meeting on 1st November, which was a key opportunity to link the existing operation of all agencies to longer term advocacy messages on disaster preparedness and drought mitigation strategies. Meetings have also continued separately between the Federation and UN agencies such as WFP, as well as with the Government Secretary at the Ministry of Social Services, to ensure a sharing of all assessments and maximisation of resources.

(iii) Co-ordination with Federation and ICRC on institutional strengthening and programme activities

The SLRCS worked in a highly co-operative partnership with the Federation and ICRC Delegations to achieve its successful Constitutional revision and adoption process. Both the Federation and ICRC were invited to participate regularly on the Society's Constitution Revision Committee, and to facilitate key workshops to enable the Society to draft a new Constitution in keeping with the "Guidance for NS Statutes" and other standards of the RC/RC Movement.

There have also been regular co-ordination meetings between the SLRCS, Federation and ICRC to explore more co-ordinated ways of programming, especially for the new Disaster Preparedness and Community Health programmes respectively which require the Society to restructure its internal Divisions into coherent units that manage these programmes across all conflict and non-conflict affected areas in a co-ordinated manner. The NS proposed a restructuring of its NHQ to accommodate these new realities, and the change management processes will begin in early 2002 after the Board of Governors gave its initial approval to the proposal from the Directors' management Team in December.

The Secretary General of SLRCS and the ICRC Co-operation Delegate in Sri Lanka jointly attended a three day global RC/RC Movement meetings in Bangkok to explore increased ways of harmonising RC/RC Movement planning and operational delivery mechanisms. The experience of harmonised working and issues and challenges in Sri Lanka were shared with representatives from other parts of the Movement. This was an important opportunity to bring back learning to Sri Lanka to continue to work on more effective tri-lateral agreements and monitoring mechanisms. The intended result is to improve the collective impact of all programmes on the vulnerable in the country.

(iv) Co-ordination with Government

This has been a period of political instability and change in central Government which has made the plans for interface and strengthened difficult to implement. Nevertheless, on a programme level effective relations have developed in the areas of contacting the Health Ministry and the National Human Disaster Response centre.

It is hoped that in early 2002 the SLRCS can approach the newly elected Government to seek further progress in developing mechanisms at all levels for effective dialogue leading to the proposal to pass a "Red Cross Act" in Parliament, and to conclude the process of establishing a clear status agreement for the Federation.

Outstanding needs

The National Society has invested heavily into its new Constitution, and now requires considerable support to help to develop its programmes and institutional strengthening further. The primary focus of Federation co-ordinated support for 2002 and 2003 will be to complete several Organisational development programme priorities such as strengthening of the finance, HRD, and management systems in the Society.

Considerable opportunities are also there to develop effective and focussed programmes by scaling up the DP, Community Health, and Humanitarian Values programmes, through which the capacities of both the branches and NHQ will continue to grow. The SLRCS shows willingness and capacity to create a learning environment to help self-reflection and capacity building strategies. Its approach to piloting health and DP programmes prior to learning from them and only then scaling up is an excellent model for other NS to learn from.

The Society is in urgent need of support for its modest but high impact programmes. It continues to build more effective partnerships and positioning with key Government institutions and external agencies as a result of its services delivered in the past six months. Further support will help this positioning to grow to be able to meet the needs of highly vulnerable parts of the population in a continuing difficult external environment with low economic growth.

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All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Head a.i.
Relationship Management Department

Hiroshi Higashiura
Head
Asia Pacific Department

Sri Lanka						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 01.39/2001		PLEDGES RECEIVED			20.12.2001	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				1'016'169		TOTAL COVERAGE 35.5%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD				39'048		
REALLOCATED FUNDS				30'000		
ECHO (SPANISH RC)				240'000		DP - DIRECT TO NS
JAPANESE - RC		4'000'000	JPY	51'328	18.12.2001	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				360'376	CHF	35.5%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
ECHO (SPANISH RC)				350'000		DP STOCK ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				350'000	CHF	